

## Issue Paper for Oregon Technical Advisory Committee

<b>Topic:</b>	90% EQIP cost share rate for beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers.	
<b>Presenter / Sponsor(s):</b>	Bill White, NRCS, Leader for Programs	
<b>Issue Statement:</b>	The new Farm Bill directs EQIP rules to address beginning and limited resource farmers/ranchers needs with a special cost-share rate of 90%. Oregon needs to define a process of LRF/R determination and use of the 90% cost-share rate.	
<b>Action Required:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review & Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advice Requested	<input type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Other:: _____
<b>Background:</b>	<p>The 2002 Farm Bill authorizes a special cost share rate for beginning and limited resource farmers/rancher. Once program rules are provided, policy will need to be developed to best apply it in Oregon.</p> <p>Previously, EQIP did not have specific guidance on LRF/R other than ensuring equal access to program benefits.</p>	
<b>Progress / Current Status:</b>	Basins develop cost lists for priority areas and statewide concerns with consideration of ways to target program participation on the priority resource concerns. Outreach efforts help to provide equal assess to USDA program benefits.	
<b>Technical / Staff Recommendation:</b>	<p>Each Basin is responsible for ensuring that the conservation needs and challenges of LRF/R are meet. In both cases, OTAC would provide sideboards for status determination. Certification criteria is developed by the Basin Work Group and is to be based on the bulleted items listed above, site specific considerations and priority resource concerns. EQIP cost lists shall be developed to effectively address the Basin's priority resource concerns.</p> <p>The following recommendations are for individual requests for LRF/R status and for specific priority areas.</p> <p><u>Individual Cases:</u> NRCS completes the conservation plan and displays the cost of eligible practices with their respective cost share rate. The participant can request the 90% cost share rate by self-certifying. Certification criteria is developed by the Basin Work Group and is to be based on the bulleted items listed above, site specific considerations and priority resource concerns.</p> <p><u>Groups Request:</u> Within a basin, a proposal will be developed with justification for the 90% cost share rate. The Basin Work Group will evaluate each proposal. The final determination will be based on Basin certification criteria, priorities and resource concerns.</p>	
<b>Attachment:</b>		